**Transcript of interview (answers only)**

My name’s Des and I live at Normanville, and I’m a builder.

I’ve been building since I was fifteen years old, so thirty years. I started building because I like doing it I suppose! My uncle was a builder, I used to sort of build things in his back yard when I was only 2 or 3 years old I remember , making things, little cubby houses with left over bricks from building sites, building boards and things for rooves. Probably got ideas even that young.

I began my trade when I was 15 years old, went to trade school, 3 years of trade school, it was a 4 years apprenticeship but 3 of those were at trade school and 4 years training with the boss, with my uncle actually.

To be a builder you’ve got to have certain skills, you’ve got to be good with your hands, do accurate work, mathematics is a good skill to have, with builders a lot of them are measuring and multiplication and dividing, making everything square, angles so yes I’d say mathematics.

Well after the apprenticeship I sort of had a few jobs with various builders, went travelling overseas, when I came back I found it easy to get work wherever I wanted to. There’s always a demand for builders, so just had various employers that I worked for. When the bush fires came through in the 1980s in the Adelaide hills I was working for a company there repairing the old houses. But yeah there always seems to be a need for builders always can get work.

Most of my works been done in Adelaide, SA areas. Little bit of building in Victoria helping out the family. Also did some building in QLD. In Port Douglas, building condominiums.

What do I enjoy about building? Would be the pleasure of making something, seeing the finished product looking back on it and thinking that you made that. Other people looking at your work and their happy with what you’ve done.

For myself I’ve built a few houses, I built two houses in Queensland and lived in those for a while. When I moved to South Australia I had a lot of materials brought down from Queensland so I thought well ill build another house, so I decided to build one of Kangaroo Island and make that into a holiday rental property for the future.

I decided to build on Kangaroo Island because I’d already invested in a house in Normanville through a building company because it was cheap then. Already had the house there and still had a lot of materials left so thought, cheap land on Kangaroo Island so I’ll build a house there. As it turns out it’s a good holiday destination, and you can do holiday rental, so that’s part of the reason for building on Kangaroo Island.

I like fishing, my dad was a fisherman so I suppose I got that off him, taking the boat out into the water. A bit of gardening, veggie garden, fruit trees that sort of things. A little bit of mechanics, I like fixing things, just a little bit of that, not too much.

This house has taken about 10 years to get completed; I’ve had a little bit of help from my uncle to build the house at the initial stages, my wife Kathleen helped too. Most of it was done in the first couple of years; the last few years have just been finishing touches fitting it out for holiday rental.

As a builder I’m sort of proud of the work that I do, probably the house on Kangaroo Island would be one of my major accomplishments I think. Apart from building extensions and that sort of thing, I did a lot of work at Cape Jervis, on the old cabins down there for the holiday place there at Cape Jervis, Wally and Nan own the place. I fixed up a lot of the old stone buildings. That was quite interesting. I liked fixing them up, re-doing the stone work and re-roofing the place, putting new windows in it. And then seeing people using it as holiday rental, people commenting on your work saying how good your work is, sort of makes it feel like it’s a good job to be in.

In the future, I’m sort of slowly working myself out of the building industry. As a builder there’s a lot of wear and tear on your body, on your back, on your knees and that sort of thing. It’s pretty hard going. As you get a little bit older you’ve got to start thinking about becoming supervisors and that sort of thing. Coming down off the rooves, it’s a good idea not to be walking around on rooves, when you get a bit older. Let the young blokes get up there and you do a more supervising or if you don’t want to do that then get into some other career path, so I’m sort of following that through with building on KI getting into the holiday rental part of things now. Just doing the maintenance, gardening and that sort of thing and so I still enjoy you know doing that, the maintenance side of things, keeps me active and saves employing someone I suppose so it can save money if you can still do the work yourself.